Occident is no Accident
This is the story of a mill, and a motive—with perhaps the suggestion of a moral. It is not a long story in the telling, for the time which the action has consumed has not been very long. It is a simple story, because, like all great things, it is built on a simple truth.

In Nineteen Hundred and One, there were two little mills, owned by the same company, doing business in two adjacent towns in North Dakota. These mills were in the heart of the hard wheat district of the Northwest and the wheat grown in that section is conceded by all experts to be the finest wheat for bread-making purposes grown anywhere in the world.

Now, these two mills always ground the local wheat. There is nothing so very remarkable about that. These mills always had ground the local wheat. They had been grinding it for nearly twenty years, and they had found a ready market for their flour right around home, up in North Dakota. These mills had been doing the natural thing, much as forty thousand other mills in the United States were and are doing. Yes, the Government census shows that there are over forty thousand mills in the United States, but they do not all have the advantages of location that these mills had. That makes quite a difference.
Now, these mills had another attribute which made quite a difference also. The head miller was a student. He studied wheat and flour and he studied original methods of separation and purification. The result of his study was an entirely different quality of flour than that made by his neighbors. All those who used this flour noticed the superior baking qualities and came back for more; and some of them told their friends, so that it was not long before the flour made by these two mills was the most sought after in all North Dakota. This was simply a new way of proving the often quoted remark of Emerson's, "If a man can write a better book, preach a better sermon or build a better mouse trap than his fellows, tho he build his house in the middle of the forest, the world will make a beaten path to his door."

As stated above, this flour was the most sought after in North Dakota. It was not the easiest to get, however. The mills were not large, only two hundred and twenty-five barrels capacity each, and four hundred and fifty barrels a day would not feed even North Dakota. But the greatest trouble was that this company did not care to make any more flour. At the prevailing prices in the competitive world's markets there was no profit in flour of the quality which these two mills produced.
THE COUNTRY WAS FLOODED WITH CHEAP FLOUR

For some time the general milling conditions had been acutely depressed on account of the fierceness of competition which had been directed along the line of cutting prices by cheapening quality. To add to the dilemma, in the beginning of this year one of the mills, the one at Jamestown, burned to the ground. This left the company with one old mill at Valley City, with a total milling capacity of two hundred and twenty-five barrels a day.

At the beginning of this year the late John Russell, or “Uncle John,” as he was affectionately called by all who knew him, had retired and a banker experienced in financial lines, had become president. In the same year a mill manager, familiar with the flour business and the world’s flour trade conditions, had taken the management.

This, then, was what the Russell-Miller Milling Co. had to build from in 1901—an old mill, a good location, the confidence of its local customers, plenty of financial backing and an organization which thoroughly understood the making of high-class flour.

It was necessary to decide whether the Jamestown mill should be rebuilt and the business increased, or whether the business should be curtailed to the small
country trade for the two hundred and twenty-five barrels capacity and the capital and organization be turned into other lines.

It seemed hopeless under such general conditions for the Russell-Miller Milling Co. to successfully re-invest its capital in enlarged milling capacity to make mediocre quality of flour at competing prices. There was already too much milling capacity in the country directed along that line.

**THE MOTIVE—QUALITY FIRST**

Fortunately there appeared one other alternative as yet untried. The Russell-Miller Milling Co. had become satisfied, through its success in a small way with high-grade flour, that the consuming public was not responsible for the cheap flour quality then in vogue. It seemed that the cutting of quality had been carried to excess and that a new flour, really superior in quality to other flours on the market, would find many consumers ready and glad to pay the extra cost. In the Autumn of 1901, the Russell-Miller Milling Co. did not have the milling equipment necessary for the national production of such a flour, but it had the proper kind of wheat, right at the door, the technical knowledge necessary for building the proper kind of mills, the financial standing for such an undertaking and, finally, the name for the
product—OCCIDENT, a name typical of the great west where the best wheat is grown.

With the one little country mill at Valley City, this company decided to enter the milling business in dead earnest, with a fixed purpose of making a higher grade of flour than had yet been produced and offer it to the flour consumers of the United States at a price high enough to permit of its continuous production.

THREE NEW MILLS WITHIN A YEAR

The success of the new departure was almost instantaneous. Within the year the Company had rebuilt the Jamestown mill, with five hundred barrels daily capacity and the most perfect milling equipment yet installed in any mill; had purchased and rebuilt a six-hundred-barrel mill at Grand Forks, making it equal in efficient equipment with the new Jamestown mill; and finally had torn to the ground the old Valley City mill and built a new plant at that place with the same high grade equipment of its new Jamestown and Grand Forks plants.

Quite a daring experiment you say—three new mills of fifteen hundred barrels capacity within a year, built on a theory which had had less than ten months to prove its soundness. But the theory was sound. The management knew that the theory was
sound from the start. It knew that people are willing to pay for a superior product if it can be shown that it is superior. The success of the Russell-Miller Milling Co. has been ample proof of this. OCCIDENT Flour showed itself at once to be worth more than other flours, and the flour consumers of the country showed themselves immediately ready to pay the price for such a product. It was what the flour-consuming public wanted. The fifteen hundred barrels daily capacity was very soon inadequate. The new Valley City mill burned within one year after its completion and was replaced with a model plant of eleven hundred barrels daily capacity. The Jamestown and the Grand Forks mills were gradually increased to a capacity of eight hundred barrels each.

Wheat washing, as well as every other milling improvement, was added to each mill as fast as such improvements were invented. In 1906 the growth of the business made necessary the building of a second mill of five hundred barrels capacity at Valley City, making sixteen hundred barrels daily capacity at that point.
MORE PROGRESS—THE MINOT MILL

In 1907 the Minot mill of eight hundred barrels capacity, the most perfectly equipped mill then in existence, was built. With the Minot mill the Russell-Miller Milling Co. now had a total of four thousand barrels daily capacity. And all of this progress was made within six years time and all of it was due to the satisfaction which the public found in the quality of OCCIDENT Flour. The mill at Minot was not completed when it became apparent that larger capacity, located nearer the OCCIDENT consumers, and where great stocks of selected wheat could be accumulated and carried in the cheapest possible form, was necessary. The result was the twenty-five hundred barrel OCCIDENT Flour mill of Minneapolis. This mill of white brick and concrete, absolutely fire-proof and sanitary, with no crack or crevice where flour bug or vermin can lodge, with its magnificent power plant, with its ceramic tile floors, marble wainscoting and white enamelled walls, with its beautiful specially designed machinery and metal elevators; with its perfectly appointed chemical and testing laboratories and with its shower baths and appointments in all departments for the comfort and cleanliness of employees, was completed at a cost of Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars in the remarkable short space of fourteen months from
the time ground was broken, and stands today in a class by itself among mills, recognized by all as the "peerless flour mill of the world." With the sales of OCCIDENT steadily on the increase, the Minneapolis mill had been in operation only a few months when further capacity became necessary, particularly to supply to the best advantage the trade of the far West, so that early in 1909 the Company completed plans and now has under construction two new modern fire-proof mills with a capacity of five hundred barrels each, one at Beach, North Dakota and one at Billings, Montana. In addition to these undertakings, the Company purchased in June of this year, the three milling plants of the Missouri Valley Milling Co. located at Mandan, Bismarck and Dickinson, N. D. These three mills are now undergoing the necessary changes and additions in equipment to bring them up to OCCIDENT standard, and they will all be turning out this high-grade product on the advent of the new crop in September. These completed give the Company a total milling capacity of about ten thousand barrels per day.

With the great growth of this business, dependent so much on one particular class of premium wheat, it would have been short-sighted policy to have overlooked the permanency of the raw material supply or to depend upon buying it second hand. This
point, not before mentioned, has by no means been neglected. During the building up of these milling properties, the Company has been constantly building and acquiring country elevators located at numerous marketing points throughout the hard wheat districts of North Dakota, until at the present time the Company owns and operates eighty-two of these country elevators with a combined storage capacity of two and one-half millions bushels, with an expert wheat buyer at each point, who under the close supervision of the testing laboratories, buys the OCCIDENT wheat supplies direct from the growers.
OCCIDENT IS NO ACCIDENT

This then is the story of OCCIDENT. From a small local company with two hundred and twenty-five barrels daily capacity to a capitalization and surplus of Two Million, Five Hundred Thousand Dollars and a daily output of Ten Thousand barrels of flour, all accomplished in eight years; and the answer is simply—Quality.

The best flour in the world, made from the best wheat in the world, in the best mills in the world, watched over and studied constantly in process of making by the best millers in the world, scrutinized and tested continuously by expert chemist and experienced baker. An organization amply financed and conservatively managed with quality and clean business methods always in view. An organization of a thousand men—officers, millers, managers, wheat buyers, salesmen—every man to the final loader filled with the single earnest purpose to have each barrel and each sack of OCCIDENT Flour reach the final consumer a perfect package of food product in perfect condition, the finest flour made on earth. This is why OCCIDENT is no Accident.

RUSSELL-MILLER MILLING CO.
GENERAL OFFICES
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.